

NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

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Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

Nevada County Transportation Commission
101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102
Nevada City, CA 95959



This Newsletter is Prepared by the Staff of the Nevada County Transportation Commission

Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director
Michael Woodman, Asst. Transportation Planner
Nancy D. Holman, Administrative Services Officer
Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant

The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-3202
Fax: (530) 265-3260

Home Page: <http://www.nctc.ca.gov>
E-mail: nctc@nccn.net

NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

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OUR 2002 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Unless you have worked for Caltrans or have had some involvement with transportation planning, you probably have never heard of the "RTIP" – the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. Other acronyms relating to transportation funding are STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) and ITIP (Interregional Transportation Improvement Program). State and Federal funds for transportation improvement projects are distributed through the STIP. Each county in the State of California is required to have a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and the NCTC (Nevada County Transportation Commission) is Nevada County's transportation planning agency. The RTPAs receive 75% of the STIP funds allocated through the RTIP and Caltrans gets the other 25% of the STIP funds through the ITIP. This splitting of funds encourages the RTPAs and Caltrans to work together in order to use these monies for planned projects.

The RTIP is a listing of transportation projects developed by the NCTC every two years. After local approval the RTIP is submitted to the California Transportation Commission (CTC). The CTC reviews and approves or denies funding for the projects in the RTIP. Our 2002 RTIP was submitted to the CTC in December 2001. On January 24th Commission Chairman Peter Van Zant and Vice-Chairman Josh Susman of Truckee appeared with NCTC Executive Director Dan Landon before the CTC in Sacramento to speak in support of NCTC's RTIP. The presentation went very well and on April 4th the CTC approved \$25.7 million in funding for the following three projects (*see page 2 for details*) from Nevada County's RTIP: \$16.3 million for project development, design, right-of-way (ROW), and construction of the **Dorsey Drive Interchange**; \$500,000 for the project development phase of the **Union Pacific Railroad Undercrossing widening project** at State Route (SR) 89 in Truckee (known as the "mousehole"); \$8.4 million for Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) and right-of-way for the future **widening of SR 49 to four-lanes**; and \$500,000 for 2004 through 2007 STIP planning activities by NCTC.

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SR 49 at Bear River Bridge

SOUTH COUNTY CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

In our February newsletter we reported that Caltrans planned to start the widening of SR 49 from south of the Bear River Bridge to the Combie/Wolf Road intersection in July or August of 2002. Unfortunately some key elements of the project development work were not completed in time to stay on that schedule.

The project has been submitted for consideration at the May meeting of the California Transportation Commission (CTC). If approved by the CTC on May 8th or 9th, the project will be advertised for bid two weeks later and bids will be opened early in July. Completion of contract documents and time allowance for the chosen contractor to mobilize construction crews will place the start of construction around September 1, 2002. Project construction activities have been planned to avoid daytime lane closures, so disruption of traffic will be kept to a minimum.

Additional project information will be provided in upcoming issues of the NCTC newsletter.

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Upcoming NCTC Meetings

The next two meetings of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) are scheduled as follows: **Wednesday, May 15, 2002 at 9:30 a.m.**, in the **Town of Truckee Council Chambers**, 10183 Truckee Airport Road, Truckee, CA; and **Wednesday, June 19, 2002 at 8:30 a.m.**, in the **Grass Valley City Council Chambers**, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, California.



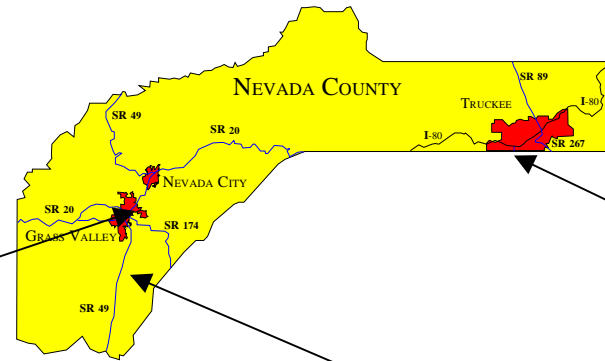
Gold Country Stage Trolley

UNMET NEEDS CONCLUSIONS AT MAY NCTC MEETING

Nevada County citizens presented their transit needs at a public hearing on "unmet transit needs" during the September 2001 NCTC meeting. Their proposals were incorporated with requests made at other public outreach efforts in the county and input given at two SSTAC (Social Services Technical Advisory Council) meetings. A draft report was then compiled by NCTC in collaboration with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. of Tahoe City. The *Draft Nevada County Transit Needs Assessment for Fiscal Year 2002-03* contains the analyses and recommendations of the proposed transit needs.

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NEVADA COUNTY'S 2002 RTIP (continued)



Dorsey Drive Interchange Widening and Ramp Project at SR 49



SR 49 Widening Project to 4-Lanes With Continuous Left Turn Lane



SR 89 South / Union Pacific RR Undercrossing Widening Project

Dorsey Drive Interchange – The Dorsey Drive Interchange project, when completed, will provide direct access to the Nevada County Sierra College Campus, Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital, and the Litton Hill Business Park. The project includes widening of the existing roadway and adding ramps on and off SR 49. This will also benefit the overall regional circulation by helping to alleviate congestion in the Brunswick Basin and East Main Street corridor and reduce delay time at these adjacent interchanges.

Est. Total Cost: \$18.4 million - Regional Improvement Program (RIP) and Regional Mitigation Fees
Existing Funds: \$ 0.5 million - RIP for PA/ED (Project Approval and Environmental Documentation)
2002 STIP: \$16.3 million - RIP: \$0.6 million for PA/ED 2002/03; \$5.2 million for PS&E and ROW 2003/04; \$9.0 million Construction 2006/07

Additional Funds: \$ 1.5 million - Regional Mitigation Fees for Construction 2006/07

SR 49 Widening – Nevada County has experienced rapid growth and SR 49 annual average daily traffic flow is projected to increase 46% by 2012 and nearly 69% by 2022. Currently the highway experiences heavy congestion on several segments during peak periods. Upgrading the existing roadway to four lanes from McKnight Road to Combie Road with a continuous left-turn lane in most segments would provide adequate capacity for future traffic. Caltrans *SR 49 Concept Report* set a goal to have the project completed by 2010. State Route 49 is part of the Interregional Road System and is designated as a High Emphasis and Focus Route.

NCTC requested \$8.4 million to complete project development and right-of-way (ROW) acquisition, to match a similar request from Caltrans. We also requested an advance of \$31.5 million for construction. CTC approved a total of \$16.8 million for project development and ROW, but did not approve the \$31.5 million. CTC staff noted that NCTC's advance request for construction might not provide full funding of a useable segment without matching funds from Caltrans. Given the importance of SR 49, NCTC will request construction funding again in 2004 and expects that Caltrans will provide matching funds for construction at that time.

Est. Total Cost: \$108.9 million - RIP and IIP (Interregional Improvement Program)
Existing Funds: \$ 1.4 million - \$0.7 million RIP and \$0.7 million IIP for PA/ED
2002 STIP: \$ 16.8 million - \$8.4 million RIP (Advance) and \$8.4 million IIP for PS&E and ROW 2002/03
Additional Funds: \$ 90.7 million - RIP and IIP, not funded

Widening of the Union Pacific Railroad Undercrossing – The Union Pacific Railroad underpass structure on SR 89 South in Truckee is known as the “mousehole”. The 72 year-old structure predates much of the development of the region, including the Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows ski areas. Major access to these resorts is gained through this structure. The current two-lane roadway is approximately 25 feet wide which creates a “bottleneck” for regional traffic, mostly evident at peak periods. In addition, the SR 89 corridor is a travel route for bicyclists and pedestrians. The development of an important shopping district to the north (Crossroads Center), coupled by the development of a housing complex to the south, has generated a demand for non-motorized travel through the structure. Pedestrians and cyclists must now maneuver along the very edge of the travel lane. Pedestrians have even been observed climbing over the 25-foot high railroad embankment and crossing the tracks rather than risk walking through the underpass.

Est. Tot. Cost: \$11.70 million - RIP, local, and other funds
2002 STIP: \$ 0.62 million - \$0.5 million RIP; \$0.12 million Truckee funds for PA/ED
Additional Funds: \$11.08 million - not funded

We hope this helps you understand how your Transportation Commission works together with Caltrans to jointly represent Nevada County at a state level as we compete with all the counties in the state for STIP dollars.

NEVADA COUNTY UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (continued from page 1)

The Commission will make a finding at its May 15th Truckee meeting that will determine if there are any identified unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. In making this determination the NCTC takes into account *cost effectiveness criteria* (cost per passenger and service hour, and operating costs), *equity* (system needed by and will benefit elderly, disabled and general public), *timing* (time frame consistent with current or planned service), *feasibility* (equipment is available), *community acceptance* (reasonable level of community support) and input from the SSTAC.

The NCTC meeting is scheduled for May 15th, 2002 at 9:30 a.m. and will be held at the Truckee Town Hall, 10183 Truckee Airport Road. **Transportation to the NCTC meeting in Truckee will be provided by Gold Country Stage and is scheduled to leave at 8:00 a.m. from the front of the Nevada County Administrative Building** (the Eric Rood Center), located at 950 Maidu Avenue in Nevada City. **If you would like to ride on the bus with us to the meeting, please call NCTC office in advance of May 15th for a reservation at (530) 265-3202.** Space is limited and seats will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis.



“THE LOOP”

On Monday April 8th, Gold Country Telecare, Inc. started a new specialized transportation service called “The Loop”. This service provides an additional weekly mobility option *for seniors age sixty and older and disabled persons* in the greater Grass Valley area. “The Loop” service is different from the demand response type service Telecare normally provides. “The Loop” is actually a *time-scheduled route* that stops at selected major shopping centers in the area, the Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Outpatient Center, downtown Grass Valley, and the Senior Center. “The Loop” service runs *on Mondays only from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and the cost is \$1.00 for a one-way trip and \$2.00 for a daily pass*. This new specialized transportation service is being funded through a grant from Catholic Health Care West.

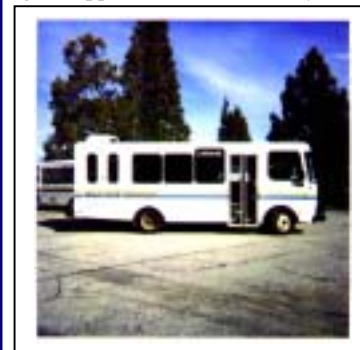
- No appointment is needed. The bus will make regular stops at specific locations only. There are no “in-between” stops.
- Cash only / No vouchers
- Driver assistance on and off the bus only! (Please do not bring more than you can carry.)

Since the first day of operation, many have enjoyed this new service. Let's make every effort to inform the eligible public of this great new opportunity to get around town on Mondays.

For schedule information call Gold Country Telecare, Inc. at (530) 272-1710.

RURAL TRANSIT SYSTEM GRANTS APPROVED

On October 4, 2001 the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted Resolution #G-01-31, officially creating the Rural Transit System Grant Program (RTSGP). This special one-year funding program made \$18 million available statewide to rural transit systems to purchase, construct, and rehabilitate transit facilities, equipment, and vehicles. The amount available to Nevada County was \$321,907. The Gold Country Stage, Gold Country Telecare, Inc., and the Town of Truckee coordinated the preparation and submittal of grant applications totaling \$321,907. On April 3, 2002 the California Transportation Commission approved the grant applications submitted by Nevada County. As a result Gold Country



Stage will be awarded funding for three new Ford/EI Dorado transit buses, powered with compressed natural gas, to replace three gasoline-powered buses that have reached the end of their service lives. Gold Country Telecare will be awarded funding for the purchase of a passenger dispatching software program. The Town of Truckee will be awarded funding for the purchase of three transit shelters.

BRUNSWICK INTERCHANGE LANDSCAPE PROJECT

Tom O'Donnell, retired Caltrans Landscape Architect and Nevada County resident, has joined forces with Nancy Lockwood, a member of the Nevada County Master Gardeners, to volunteer their time to plan a landscaping scheme for the Brunswick Interchange at SR 49. Other project participants are Ann Marie Robinson, Caltrans District 3 Planner and NCTC Liaison, and Dan Landon, NCTC's Executive Director.

Tom has identified six areas within the interchange where additional vegetation and/or trees could be planted. Plantings may not interfere with the driver's line of sight and must be kept out of the “clear recovery zone” along the edge of the roadway. In addition to beautifying the area for motorists, the landscape plan will provide some “focal points” (see photo) for pedestrians.



Currently there are no funds budgeted for this project so local donations may be sought in the future to purchase plants and trees. *To keep the cost of the project in line with the \$0 budget, NCTC hopes service oriented organizations within our community will volunteer to assist with planting projects. Any interested group may call the NCTC office at 265-3202 for details.*